

PATENTS

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Katsumi Sasaki **Examiner:** Unassigned

Serial No: To be assigned **Art Unit:** Unassigned

Filed: Herewith **Docket:** 15174

For: SURGICAL OPERATION
INSTRUMENT **Dated:** December 21, 2001

PRO
J10/029627
12/21/01

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Washington, D.C. 20231

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.97 and 1.98, it is requested that the following references, which are also listed on the attached Form PTO-1449, be made of record in the above-identified case.

1. U.S. Patent No. 5,350,391, dated September 27, 1994, issued to Iacovelli;
2. U.S. Patent No. 5,520,678, dated May 28, 1996, issued to Heckele et al.;
3. U.S. Patent No. 5,314,445, dated May 24, 1994, issued to Heidmueller Née Degwitz et al.;

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. § 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231 on December 21, 2001.

Dated: December 21, 2001

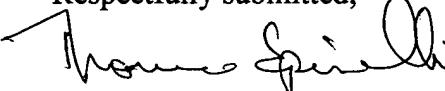
Mishelle Mustafa

4. U.S. Patent No. 5,275,608, dated January 4, 1994, issued to Forman et al.; and
5. U.S. Patent No. 5,908,436, dated June 1, 1999, issued to Cuschieri et al.;

References 1-4 were cited in a Search Report received from the Japanese Patent Office dated May 22, 2001. Reference 5 is cited in the specification. Applicant is submitting copies of the above-cited references, together with a copy of the Search Report. The relevance of references 1-4 has been described in the Search Report.

Inasmuch as this Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted in accordance with the schedule set out in 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b), no statement or fee is required.

Respectfully submitted,



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